

SPORTCHECK

AZIZULHASNI, JUN HOONG LAUDED

Duo crowned as country's top athletes

AIDA ADILAH MAT
aida_adilah@nstp.com.my

AS EXPECTED, reigning world champions Azizulhasni Awang and Cheong Jun Hoong were named as Sportsman and Sportswoman of the Year at the 2017 National Sports Awards yesterday.

Track cyclist Azizulhasni, a bronze medallist at the Rio Olympics, won the keirin gold medal at the World Championships in Hong Kong in April last year to become the first ever Malaysian to wear the rainbow jersey.

Diver Jun Hoong was equally impressive at the World Aquatics Championships in Budapest last July.

The Ipoh-born ended the dominance of China divers by winning the women's 10m platform individual gold medal.

It is Jun Hoong's first Sportswoman of the Year award and is Azizulhasni's third win after 2009 and 2010.

Azizulhasni said he is honoured

to be recognised for his achievements.

"I am very grateful to be named Sportsman of the Year for 2017. This is the third time I have won the most prestigious award for athletes in Malaysia," said Azizulhasni.

"Winning this makes all the hard work, sacrifices and challenges I had faced worthwhile.

"It will definitely inspire me to strive for greater heights. I am now determined to do well at the upcoming Gold Coast Commonwealth Games and Indonesia Asian Games."

Azizulhasni added that he hopes his fellow Malaysian athletes will all work hard to achieve greater success.

The duo received RM20,000 in prize money, a trophy and a certificate each which was presented by Yang di-Pertuan Agong Sultan Muhammad V.

Jun Hoong, however, did not attend the awards as she is currently in Japan for the second leg of the Diving World Series.

ROLL OF HONOUR — Sports-



Yang di-Pertuan Agong Sultan Muhammad V (right) helps Azizulhasni Awang put on the Sportsman jacket after he bagged the Sportsman of the Year title at the 2017 National Sports Awards night in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. PIC BYAUZZUDIN SAAD

man of the Year: Azizulhasni Awang (track cycling); **Sportswoman of the Year:** Cheong Jun Hoong (diving).

Para Sportsman of the Year: Ziyad Zolkefli (athletics).

Men's Coach of the Year: Poad

Md Kassim (athletics); **Women's Coach of the Year:** Yoong Sze Yui (basketball).

Men's Team of the Year: Hockey; **Women's Team of the Year:** Bowling.

Leadership Award: Datuk Wan

Nawawi Wan Ismail (Malaysia Lawn Bowls Federation).

Sports Icon Award: Sultan Ahmad Shah (football).

Special Awards: Johor Darul Ta'zim (football club), Hafizh Syahrin Abdullah (MotoGP rider).